

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, RO

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE AT CELEBRATIONS OF "INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY"

REF; BUCHAREST 786 (NOTAL)

1. REFTEL REQUESTED GUIDANCE WHETHER MRS. HARRY G.
BARNES, JR., WIFE OF US AMBASSADOR TO ROMANIA, SHOULD
ACCEPT INVITATION OF WIFE OF SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO A
MARCH 12 PARTY IN BUCHAREST CELEBRATING "INTERNATIONAL
WOMEN'S DAY," AN EVENT WHICH IS ALSO OFFICIALLY OBSERVED
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IN ROMANIA AND OTHER EE COUNTRIES.

2. "INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY" OBSERVANCE (ORIGINALLY A SCANDINAVIAN CUSTOM) BECAME IN THE LATE 1940'S AT SOVIET INSTANCE A VEHICLE FOR COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA. AN "INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT" WAS ESTABLISHED IN EAST BERLIN, MAGAZINES PUBLISHED, ETC. ALL THIS PROCEEDED WITH USUAL ANTI-WESTERN POLEMICS, AND WE DID NOT OF COURSE ATTEND CEREMONIES OR PARTICIPATE IN ANY WAY.

3. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF CURRENT INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR (IWY) OBSERVANCE AND GENERAL AMBIANCE OF DETENTE, DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR MRS. BARNES TO ATTEND THE SOVIET PARTY SHOULD SHE WISH TO DO SO. WE ASSUME WIVES OF DIPLOMATS OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AND OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES ALSO PLAN TO ATTEND. OF

COURSE, IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL TO DETERMINE IN ADVANCE TO THE DEGREE POSSIBLE THAT THE OCCASION WILL NOT BE EXPLOITED FOR ANTI-US PROPAGANDA. DEPARTMENT HAS NO REASON TO ASSUME SINISTER SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THIS REGARD, HOWEVER.

4. AS BACKGROUND FOR THOSE WHO MAY HAVE OCCASION TO DISCUSS IWY ACTIVITIES, IT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND THAT THERE WILL BE TWO, IN EFFECT COMPETING, SERIES OF OBSERVANCES THIS YEAR: ONE FOCUSING ON THE UN-SPONSORED CONGRESS IN MEXICO CITY, TO BE HELD IN JUNE, IN WHICH WE ARE PARTICIPATING FULLY; ANOTHER, UNDER COMMUNIST AUSPICES, TO BE HELD PROBABLY IN EAST BERLIN LATER THIS YEAR. WITH THE LATTER WE DO NOT ASSOCIATE OURSELVES. SOVIETS HAVE BEEN UNHAPPY AT MOMENTUM DEVELOPING BEHIND THE UN OBSERVANCE WHICH THEY REGARD AS PREEMPTING A FIELD PREVIOUSLY THEIR OWN MONOPOLY, BUT ARE (GRUDGINLY) PARTICIPATING IN MEXICO CITY ANYWAY.

5. AS FURTHER BACKGROUND WE ARE REPEATING MEXICO CITY 1470 FEB. 19, 1975. WE ALSO CALL POSTS' ATTENTION TO USIA CIRCULAR CM 1735 DECEMBER 6, 1974.

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6. COMMENT FROM INFO ADDRESSEES TO THIS MESSAGE IS INVITED. DEPARTMENT WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE REPORTING OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AND INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR OBSERVANCES IN YOUR COUNTRIES. KISSINGER

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